

CHAPTER NINE

Elements of Opposition to Soviet Schemes

NATIVE CONSERVATISM AND NATIONALISM

ELEMENTS of opposition to the Soviet policy were manifold. The

first important element was the Iranian government itself.

Whatever may be said about its efficiency or the honesty of its employees, the fact remains that it was the government that shouldered

the burden of maintaining security, collecting taxes, and securing

adequate supplies whenever food was scarce. Thus it was the gov-

ernment and its provincial representative* that daily had to face all

the complications resulting from direct Soviet obstructionism or from

anarchy produced by the more violent activities of the Tudeh. The

responsibility of the government will appear even more pronounced

if it is realized that until the arrival of Seyyid Zia ed-Din from exile in

the fall of 1943 there was no organized political movement that op-

posed Communism ideologically. The small political parties that had

been formed prior to Seyyid Zia's arrival could not be considered a

match for the Tudeh, closely knit itself and fully conscious of its

aims. The absence of organized political opposition to the Com-

munists became very obvious during the parliamentary elections in

the fall of 1943.

Government action against Soviet influence

expressed itself in many ways. Of course, most drastic was direct army or police intervention against the Tudeh. In Teheran and in the south the government was generally successful in applying force against the Tudeh